DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 094 580 FL 006 269

AUTHOR	Temp, George E.
TITLE	Final Evaluation Report for Alaska Native Education Board, Inc., 1973-74. First Year of the Bilingual/Bicultural Program.
INSTITUTION	Alaska Native Education Board, Inc., Anchorage.
PUB DATE	Jun 74
NOTE	24p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indian Languages; *Biculturalism; *Bilingual Education; Community Support; Elementary Education; *Eskimos; Language Instruction; Language Skills; Program Attitudes; *Program Evaluation; Reading Skills; Student Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	*Alaska

ABSTRACT

The ANEB bilingual/bicultural programs were in operation in eight rural communities in Alaska in 1973-74. This evaluation is based on the results of interviews with members of the community, staff, and student body. The information collected was in four areas: (1) fall 1973 student pretest information; (2) spring 1974 student posttest information; (3) winter-spring 1974 community reactions; (4) spring 1974 staff reactions. The questions presented to the students tested their knowledge of present and past native cultures. The results demonstrated a marked increase in knowledge of historical culture due to the instruction of the bilingual/bicultural programs; their knowledge of the present native culture was already high. In regard to reading and speaking skills in native languages, 68 percent of the children were able to read some of the native language materials by spring 1974, but there is still room for movement toward equal native/English-speaking ability. Virtually all of the students involved were enthusiastic about the programs. In addition, wide community support of the programs was shown from a random sampling of members of the community. Finally, 14 of 16 staff members questioned wanted the program to continue. (LG)

ED 094580

1973-74

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

for

ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION BOARD, INC.

First year of the Bilingual/Bicultural Program

Barrow
English Bay
Gambell
Savoonga
Hughes
Port Graham
Tetlin
Venetie

FL006269

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Kathy Perrin, Director, Native Education Program
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

This is the second and final evaluation report ordered by the Alaska Native Education Board, Inc. for 1973-74. The Interim Evaluation Report in January 1974 covered briefly the evaluation plan, needed revisions, and some interesting data from the Fall 1973 data collection.

FINAL EVALUATION

I have examined the information collected from students, staff, and community persons involved in the ANEB's bilingual/bicultural program during the first year of operation of the project. My examination was made in accordance with generally accepted evaluation procedures, and accordingly included such mathematical calculations and analyses as were necessary under the circumstances.

In my opinion, the information collected supports the conclusion that the first year of operations was successful and warrants the continuance and extension of the program in 1974-75. Specific documentation of this conclusion and qualifications of it are contained in the body of this report.

George E. Temp

George E. Temp
Research Psychologist
Project Evaluator

June 30, 1974

During 1973-74 the ANEB program was in operation in eight rural communities throughout Alaska. In many ways each community must be considered as unique. It is very difficult to generalize about Alaskan rural areas because of differing cultural and language histories that defy the expertise of any one person to comprehend. In point of fact the ANEB projects have utilized the services of non-native persons and native speaking persons in six sub-areas of Alaska in order to adapt as closely as possible to specific local needs and conditions. Six sub-areas to serve eight communities -- this, in itself, tells much of the story of the difficulties facing the ANEB in attempting to provide a needed educational service.

It is also one of the difficulties facing anyone attempting to report in a reasonably concise manner on the accomplishments and frustrations of the first year of operations in these eight communities. Ideally, each community would have its own evaluation report (specifically designed and related to conditions in that village) and conclusions. As a necessary compromise a single evaluation plan was adopted and approved by the ANEB last September and is the basis of the present report.

The Information Collected

The flow of information in and out of any project is usually tremendous. If the memoranda, letters, and reports prepared in one year were collected and stacked, they would be, generally, several inches high and make 2 or 3 weighty volumes. However, the specific information referred to now is that information collected specifically for evaluation purposes. This information includes:

Fall 1973 Student Pretest Information
Spring 1974 Student Post-test Information
Winter-Spring Community Reactions
Spring 1974 Staff Reactions

In each of the eight villages, essentially the same information was collected with some modifications built into the process to accomodate to local and unique conditions. For example, when assessing the students' knowledge of native history, it was intended that all questions be asked in such a way as to use local names and local persons as focus for the question being asked. It was not intended that a more general "native history" of Alaska be assessed.

As previously reported (Interim Report, January 1974) several of the Fall 1973 student questions were too easy for the children and it seemed unnecessary to repeat testing on those questions in the Spring. This, fortunately, allowed us to add several questions of interest to the Spring 1974 data

collection. Also in January, at a staff meeting with the project director, local coordinators and the evaluator, it was decided to have separate forms of questions for Grades K-3 and Grades 4-8. This also allowed some greater depth of questions to be asked in the severely limited testing time which all agreed should not be expanded (no more than 20 minutes per child).

Of course, some questions were retained from the Fall testing on both the K-3 and 4-8 forms in order to allow estimates of change from Fall to Spring to be made. (It is desireable that such a procedure be used in any subsequent testing in 1974-75 or beyond, also.)

The community reaction information was to be collected informally -- everyone agreeing that a formal interview procedure would be resented in all communities and yield less reliable reactions for that reasons.

The staff reaction survey was an anonymously completed form and therefore possibly more truthful than other possible methods of getting staff reaction. About one-half of the forms were returned (typical response rate for such questionnaires) even though every effort was made to make the form easy to complete and postage paid envelopes for return were provided. Non-returned staff reaction forms are considered as indicating lack of interest in the program and must not be considered as either satisfaction with what is going on or dissatisfaction.

Specific Information of Interest

An attempt will be made to keep this section as brief as possible but there are several important portions of the evaluation information of interest to different possible readers of this report. Conciseness in presentation will remain the goal in so far as possible and consistent with accuracy and clarity. The reader is encouraged to skip and skim at his own pleasure.

Community Reaction. The opinion of members of each community served by the ANEB program is of major interest to everyone because without local community support there would be no program at all. A sampling of opinions gathered from all villages * are included in the pages below.

> "He had one complaint. The complaint was the situation that the students are too worked up after the Inupiaq hour that the regular teacher has a hard time teaching them anything the rest of the morning. He said the children try so hard that they become exhausted and then restless.
> Apparently one day the students and the Inupiaq instructor got carried away about naming the parts of the body and 45 minutes had gone by before the instructor and the children realized it."

> "Believes that the program is working toward reasonable goals and the students are benefiting from the bi-lingual instruction."

> "This is really good for our children. Too bad it took the school so long to begin using our language to teach children. This is really helpful."

*Community Reaction forms from Hughes had not been received when this was being written. However, similar reactions are expected.

Some additional community reactions are as follows:

"She thinks it's a wonderful chance for all the children to learn their language and old stories of their people. Very satisfied with results of the program."

"I think bilingual education may be a whitemen's trick for holding our children back in learning English and getting the kind of education they need to get ahead. Subsequent contacts: As her understanding grows of what is involved in bi-lingual education she seems to be coming around. She is still somewhat wary of it all."

"It's doing pretty good."

"Thinks it's alright. Thought it would be better with another teacher."

All of the community reactions listed so far have been picked from the numerous comments available by reaching in and taking which ever one the hand fell upon. A further random sample of community reaction, selected in the same manner, is continued below.

"This person felt that the reason that two instructors left the program is the lack of prepared lessons to teach from. This person really wants to program to continue."

"Favorably impressed with the smooth operation of the program and interest the kids show for their classroom work. Would like to see the program continue."

"I support bi-lingual education. It is really great for our children and something that should have been done long ago. Not only will our children learn quicker but our culture is being taught to them too! That's good."

"Her children previously did not speak or understand Sugcestun. Now they utilize the language whenever possible. She is entirely enthused with this program."

"My grandson is really doing well in school this year. He is learning very quickly both in English and Yupik."

"Our girl is learning good."

"Don't really know what the kids are doing, but now the kids know how to count. They know the names of some of the animals that they didn't know before. He thinks it is very good that Native is taught in school."

One more random sample of community reactions is presented below. It should be apparent at the end of reading the next batch what the overwhelming reaction toward the program has been across all villages.

"Delights that her youngest son is picking up Inupiaq words fast!"

"Thinks it's a good idea for kids to learn Sugcestun in school."

"It is a good thing that the beginners have a chance to begin school using their own language. This should help them to learn easier."

"He thinks it's a good idea for children to study their language. He feels it is a practical course for them as it can be used in the community and makes communication easier between village elders and the younger generation."

"I see the kids are more relaxed in school and they really are enjoying being there. It seems like they are learning faster than before. I hope the program continues so the kids in the first grade will not be left "high and dry" next year."

"It's pretty good. I don't hear them talk, though."

"Thinks bilignual education is good. Thinks the kids should learn English and Native. Thinks the kids will always speak Native in (name of village). Is glad the program provides a job for someone."

On each of the community reaction forms completed by the local coordinators, there was also a place to indicate whether or not the person talked to would like to see the program continue. In one instance the person was undecided and in another the person talked with did not wish to see the program continued. His reaction was, "You teach the kids English in school and we will teach them Eskimo at home. The kids need to learn English or they will fall behind in school." All other interview forms completed (N = 56) indicated that the persons interviewed wanted the program to continue. This coupled with the reactions reported above would seem to clearly indicate wide and continuing community support for the ANEB program in the villages.

Staff Reaction.

Another major source of information about the first year of the ANEB program was the staff. As indicated earlier an annonymous staff reaction survey was completed. These make interesting reading and provide another point of view about the success and problems of the bilingual/bicultural program. The staff reaction form was mailed to all the bi-

lingual speaking staff, the local coordinators, and the English speaking teachers as well as the school principals involved. Each form was accompanied with a return envelope, postage paid. As the cover letter indicated to each recipient, every effort was made to maintain the complete anonymity of the person responding. Even the envelopes in which the completed forms were returned to the evaluator were not opened by anyone connected to the project. A student was hired to open the letters, eliminate all identifying marks or signatures, and to destroy the envelopes before returning the forms to the evaluator for use.

Returns were received from 16 persons (about one-half of the possible returns). On the optional part of the form where checks could be made to indicate their role in the project, there were 4 marks opposite coordinator; 5 by bilingual instructor; 3 by English speaking teacher/principal and 4 persons decided not to mark this optional section. It appears then that a sample of opinion from each of the major groups in the staff were received.

Some specific comments are reported below so the reader may judge for himself the staff reaction. On the question about whether the staff person would like to see the program continue next year the results were: 14 -- yes or definitely; 1 -- no; and 1 that was indifferent personally about the continuance of the program.

"It's going beautifully. Maybe need more bilingual teachers."

"The ANEB bilingual/bicultural program offers the students involved the opportunity to study and learn their language and cultural heritage under an academic setting. For the children in our local program, this is an unique educational experience. For some of them, it involves a developing of skills which they already possessed to some degree. For others, it is a challenge in that they previously did not utilize their language to any extent. It is definitely a beneficial program for the student.

As for the bilingual instructors and administrative personnel, there is a great sense of satisfaction which can be gained by their personal involvement in the program both through instruction and achieving goals previously set as well as helping to preserve a language and culture which otherwise might have gradually faded out.

Parents seem to be entirely in favor of continuation of this program and the children as a whole entirely enjoy their classes."

"I think it's a <u>great</u> deal that this program is going on in this village. My reasons are: I like to keep it going cause, I hate to see the Language die. Ever since it started we've gained about 60% that each student is learning from what I'm teaching each day. Let's keep it Truckin' ."

"Need for more training (pre-service). Appreciate cooperation of ANEB. Changing of certified teachers and instructors during school year. Appreciate interest of the bilingual instructors."

"There needs to be a better understanding with the need of the bilingual program to the village people. Many of the people (adults) do not see a real need for the program. There has been very little said to the people of our village about the necessity of the program. In other words, a better public relations should be a goal."

"The parents like the idea of their children learning the Aleut language and especially the written language. My students, most of them, do not speak it or understand Aleut. I know the program is helping students.

ANEB does keep us informed and sets up workshops which on my part were very helpful in learning new ways to teach.

At times some children are hard to teach but that's just a minor problem. Also children who speak the language have a harder time learning written language. I've talked with people and they've had the same problems. But the children are learning slower than others who do not speak it."

The staff reactions reported above are 6 of the 16 selected at random from the batch received. The total staff reaction forms will be sent to the project administrator for detailed reading and study to amplify the main conclusion which is reflected in the comments above and in the 14 staff members that stated they want the ANEB program to continue next year. The staff felt the program is doing some good things for children.

Information collected directly from students. Regardless of community reaction and staff reaction if students are not learning anything most readers would feel that the program was not working properly. In order to speak to the question of student learning in a meaningful way, it was necessary to design some questions directly related to the objectives and goals of the ANEB program. These goals were stated in the original project proposal and served as a helpful base for construction of specific questions to be asked both

young children (K-3) and older children (4-8). It must be remembered that in both groups the children must be considered as beginners in the formal study of bicultural/bilingual education. And among these beginners there were those who could already speak the native language and those that could not; those that could speak English and those that could not; and that the children varied on their initial understanding and background of knowledge about native culture in their own village.

Questions on Knowledge of Present Village Culture

In the Fall of 1973 sveral questions were asked of the children to determine the extent of their knowledge of present-day village culture. These questions were simple and direct: Tell me about the village. Where is this village? What do village people do? Tell me about the winter. Tell me about the summer. What foods do you like best? What foods do people in the village like? Tell me about the people in the village. Who is the chief? Who is the police officer? Who works with the mail? Who runs a store? Who else do you know who is helping to run the village? Tell me about the sirplanes that come to the village. Who flies the airplanes? What does the airplane bring?

On these questions (asked in either the native language and/or English) village children of all ages did quite well. From 59 to 79 per cent of the children tested could give good answers or the highest quality answer (almost as an adult of

the village would give).

Older children (Grades 4-8) were asked some additional questions dealing with the life cycle of a fish or animal common to the village area and with the dangers present in village life. Some 69 per cent and 63 per cent of the children gave good or higher answers to these questions, respectively.

All ages were also asked to name and describe in the native language local plants and animals. Some 24 per cent of the children could name 4 or more plants and some 45 per cent could name 4 or more animals of the village area.

All of the above information is based upon testing done early in the Fall of 1973 and, therefore, may be considered as a description of what the children already knew about their culture and environment as the program was beginning in the villages.

To the evaluator and the local coordinators, these percentages seemed sufficiently high so that Spring evaluation testing could be shifted to assessment of the knowledge of children about the "old days" of village life. It was assumed that additional increases in knowledge of present village culture would take place over the school year but that precious testing time should not be concentrated in this area. However, one question related to proposal objectives was added to the Spring 1974 testing for older children.

This added question asked the 4-8 graders to draw a quick map of the village. These sketches were rated high if they included important village points in the opinion of the bilingual instructor from the village. Some 79 per cent of the older children could do this task well in the Spring of 1974.

Questions on Knowledge of "Old Days"

The Fall 1973 testing also included several questions on the historical culture of the specific village. Children of all ages were asked to tell two native stories; to tell about relationships with other native peoples; and to describe art or craftworks that the village people have developed over a long history. Older children were also asked to tell about the history of locating the village in its present site; and to tell why village people are known to other peoples around Alaska.

The shifts from Fall 1973 to Spring 1974 testing on these questions is of interest.

On the Fall testing only about 20 per cent of all children could tell a native story. By Spring, some 60 per cent of the children could tell a story in such a manner to receive a good or higher rating from the bilingual instructor.

On the Fall testing about 50 per cent of the children could describe the relationship of village people to others. By Spring 1974, some 64 per cent of the children could do this well.

Of the older children (4-8) only 29 per cent could adequately explain the history of why the village was located where it is in the Fall. By Spring, some 48 per cent of the children were able to give a good or higher answer. Older children also were asked about why village people were known to other people in the Fall and 27 per cent could answer this adequately. Some 60 per cent gave a good or higher answer in the Spring.

New questions on knowledge of the "old days" were added for the Spring 1974 testing. These included such direct questions as: How did native people live in the old days? What foods did our people eat in the old days? How did the men hunt? What did they hunt?

Some 38 per cent of younger children (K-3) and 68 per cent of older children (4-8 grades) were able to give good or higher rated answers to the quesion on how native people lived in the old days. On the foods eaten question, some 67 per cent of the younger and 92 per cent of the older children gave good answers in the Spring of 1974. And on the hunting questions, 58 per cent of the younger and 81 per cent of the older children rated good or better.

Older children were also asked questions about fishing and about specific local village persons from earlier days. On the questions "How did our people fish in the old days? What did they catch?" the older children scored at good or higher in 81 per cent of the answers given. On the three questions dealing with village persons known from earlier days, 38 to 51 per cent of the children could give good or better answers in the Spring testing.

Some Conclusions

This section of the report on information collected directly from the students has, so far, concentrated upon the knowledge of past and present culture of the villages in the program. What conclusions seem supported by the information presented?

One, it seems apparent that the children had a higher knowledge of present village culture than was anticipated prior to the Fall testing.

Two, it appears that knowledge of the historical culture of the village and its people is increasing from the effects of the program. (This is true although only post testing was done on some questions. The questions included on Fall and Spring indicate increases and it is safe to assume that if more of the history questions had been included on the Fall testing that comparable increases would have been observed from Fall to Spring testing.)

Three, as a general statement, it is apparent that the children in the bilingual/bicultural program are now or soon will be in possession of a substantial body of

knowledge about their specific local native culture, both past and present. For this reason, it will be important in future program efforts to specifically identify additional information and concepts about the village culture that could serve as the focus of instruction in this portion of the bilingual/bicultural program. If this is not done, then children in the program for two or more years may become tired of the repetition of concepts and knowledge that they have already studied in some detail and already know in substantial amounts. In short, the cultural curriculum must be expanded soon or most of the children will have adequately mastered what is the bulk of that curriculum at present.

Assessment of Reading and Speaking Native

One of the major concerns of the bilingual/bicultural program is the development of language abilities in oral and written native languages. (The regular school program is to provide the same capabilities in the English language.) Therefore, the assessment of how well the program has been doing during its first year of operation must speak to the question of the development of reading and speaking skills in each of the native languages within the program.

Assessment of this aspect of the program (as the cultural aspects) was completed by the bilingual instructors who are the only ones fully capable of determining the child's progress in the specific language of the village area. By questioning the child in native (when possible) and listening t his or her answers in native (when so given), an accurate

estimate of the child's ability for oral expression in the native language was formed. The bilingual instructor was asked to indicate which language the child was able to speak most easily and clearly.

In the Fall 1973 testing 34 per cent of the children were classified as speaking the native language most easily and clearly. This figure was 39 per cent during the Spring 1974 testing.

English was most clearly spoken by 31 per cent of the children in the Fall testing and by 30 per cent in the Spring testing.

And, finally, some 35 per cent of the children were rated as speaking both languages (English and native) about the same in the Fall. The corresponding figure for the Spring testing was 31 per cent.

Clearly, given the number of children involved in the testing during the Fall and during the Spring, there has been no significant shift toward producing a theoretical 100 per cent who are equally comfortable in both languages. The minor differences in the percentages from Fall to Spring must be considered as chance differences due to measurement variations. Thus, there is still plenty of room for significant movement toward equal capability in the two languages.

This important focus of the bilingual/bicultural program must continue be of major concern and cooperative effort between both the English speaking teacher and the bilingual teacher if program objectives are to be accomplished. It is

therefore recommended that the Alaska Native Education Board, Inc. direct a significant amount of its efforts during the coming year to articulating a cooperative effort (especially where the children are presently either monolingual English or monolingual native speaking) on language development in the other language, also. This could be most readily accomplished at the local level by an exchange between the two relevant teachers to outline a set of basic utterances and vocabulary development that both will emphasize during selected weeks of the next academic year. Such exchanges might have other benefits for the children involved also as both teachers working with the children would be better informed about what was going on during the times when the other was working with the children.

Reading skill in the native language was assessed directly with available materials printed in the local language. (Since all children are beginners in the learning of reading of the native language, it is possible to use the same materials for all ages of children. Anyway, in each language the available printed literature is still very, very small and, in a sense, is represented almost entirely by the set of instructional and literary materials used in the schools by the bilingual instructors.)

Assessed in this manner, the percentage of children who were rated as being able to read the materials presented rose from 12 per cent in the Fall 1973 testing to 41 per cent in the Spring 1974 testing. Those rated as unable to read the materials in the Fall were 71 per cent of those tested. This percentage dropped to 32 per cent by Spring 1974. And the category of those able to read some of the material rose from 17 per cent in the Fall to 27 per cent in the Spring.

Thus, by Spring 1974 68 per cent of the students in the program were reported as being able to read at least some of the material or all of the material presented. Only 32 per cent still were classified as being unable to read any native presented (these were, of course, mostly K-1 children where no instruction had yet begun on learning to read).

Student Reaction

Finally, each student was asked: Do you like learning (native language) and about our people? It is significant that 100 per cent of the older children and 96 per cent of the younger children responded "Yes." This is strong evidence of student acceptance and enthusiasm for the bilingual/bicultural program.

What Does It All Mean?

First, as stated at the beginning of this report, the overall conclusion must be that the Alaska Native Education Board's program was successful in its first year of operation. Children gained in knowledge of the native language and culture; staff reaction was passive to enthusiastic (with only isolated specific instances of rejection and dissatisfaction); and community reaction was supportive and strong even after several months of the program.

Second, some specific areas where concentrated effort during 1974-75 would be appropriate were identified. It is recommended that each of these receive specific consideration and attention in any staff training activities conducted during the coming school year.

Third, it is difficult to imagine what would be the extent of negative reaction and response on the part of both students and the communities involved if the ANEB were unable or unwilling to continue its efforts for at least another year. Therefore, in a real sense, the ANEB must continue the present program and attempt to satisfy the demands for additional programs in other communities to the best of its ability. This means continued efforts to secure funds and personnel in the months ahead.

Finally, evaluators are suppose to remain detached and objective (and we try to maintain that necessary distance) but a word of commendation to the staff and program management is in order. The ANEB group is functioning well, has accomplished an immense amount of work without serious complaint, and apparently has served students as much or more than could reasonably be hoped for during an initial year of operations. It is a pleasure to be working with such a project staff.

George E. Temp
Research Psychologist

June 1974

Data Retention

The full body of forms and all data obtained during 1973-74 will be retained on file for a minimum of three years so that it may be available for additional analyses and use in subsequent years of operation of the program.